

Message Text

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73

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 USIA-06 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 /033 W

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R 261025Z AUG 75

FM AMCONSUL ZAGREB

TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3285

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, YO

SUBJECT: YUGOSLAV PRINTING INDUSTRY SOCIAL ACCORD AND
PRINTING AND GRAPHIC ARTS CATALOG SHOW

REF: BELGRADE 4446

1. CONGEN OFFICERS MADE KEY PROSPECT CALL ON GRAFOIMPEX, ZAGREB, AUGUST 25. GRAFOIMPEX REPS AT MEETING WERE HEADS OF IMPORT AND EXPORT SECTIONS. GRAFOIMPEX FUNCTIONS NOT ONLY AS A TRADE ASSOCIATION BUT ALSO AS A COOPERATIVE WHICH BUYS/ SELLS AND IMPORTS/EXPORTS UPON REQUEST FOR ITS 113-MEMBER FIRMS IN THE PRINTING AND GRAPHIC ARTS INDUSTRIES.

2. AS SUGGESTED IN REFTTEL, WE RAISED QUESTION OF EXISTENCE AND IMPACT OF SOCIAL ACCORD SIGNED RECENTLY BY GRAFOIMPEX MEMBERS IN WHICH THEY AGREED TO DEAL ON IMPORTS ONLY WITH FOREIGN FIRMS WHICH HAD AGENTS IN YUGOSLAVIA. GRAFOIMPEX REPS CONFIRMED THAT SUCH AN ACCORD FOR THE PRINTING AND GRAPHICS INDUSTRY HAD RECENTLY BEEN CONCLUDED. THEY STATED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE ACCORD WAS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF SMALL EXPORT-IMPORT TRADERS WHO ARE ONLY marginally USEFUL TO THE ASSOCIATION'S MEMBERS. "WE DON'T WANT TO ELIMINATE COMPETITION," EXPLAINED THE EXPORT CHIEF. "WE JUST WOULD RATHER HAVE 20-30 COMPETENT SPECIALISTS THAN 200 FIRMS THAT ONLY OCCASIONALLY HANDLE EQUIPMENT IN OUR FIELD."

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3. GRAFOIMPEX ITSELF IS A MAJOR EXPORTER OF PRINTED MATERIALS ON BEHALF OF A NUMBER OF ITS MEMBER FIRMS AND ON AN AD HOC BASIS ACTS AS AN IMPORTER OF EQUIPMENT FOR MEMBER FIRMS. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO THE ASSOCIATION REPS IT DOES NOT REPRESENT ANY FOREIGN MANUFACTURERS IN YUGOSLAVIA AND HAS NO PLANS TO ACQUIRE AGENCIES.

4. WHEN ASKED IF LARGE FIRMS IN THE INDUSTRY WERE NOT AUTHORIZED TO AND MIGHT NOT PREFER TO IMPORT ON THEIR OWN ACCOUNT, THE ASSOCIATION REPS RESPONDED THAT THIS AVENUE WAS NOT CLOSED BUT THAT AS A PRACTICAL MATTER (VIZ., LOWER COMMISSIONS) LARGE FIRMS PREFERRED TO ORDER FROM ABROAD THROUGH THE ASSOCIATION. THEY CITED A RECENT EXAMPLE OF SUCH A PURCHASE BY VJESNIK, THE LEADING CROATIAN DAILY, WHICH WAS MADE THROUGH THE ASSOCIATION (US EQUIPMENT FROM ROCKWELL).

5. ASSOCIATION READILY AGREED TO PUBLICIZE CATALOG SHOW BUT POINTED OUT THAT DEADLINE ALREADY HAS PASSED FOR ITS NEXT MONTHLY JOURNAL. THEY SUGGESTED WE MAIL A PROMOTIONAL BROCHURE TO EACH OF ITS MEMBERS WITH A NOTATION THAT THE MAILING HAS THE ASSOCIATION'S BLESSING (AND SUPPLIED MEMBERSHIP LIST). GRAFOIMPEX REPS COULD SEE NOTHING IN SOCIAL ACCORD TO INHIBIT MEMBERS FROM VISITING CATALOG SHOW. ON CONTRARY, NOTING THAT YUGOSLAVIA PRODUCES VIRTUALLY NO PRINTING OR GRAPHIC ARTS EQUIPMENT, THEY FELT AN EXHIBITION BASED ON FOREIGN-MADE MACHINERY WOULD BE OF GREAT INTEREST TO ITS MEMBERS AND SHOULD BE WELL ATTENDED.

6. ON BASIS OF FOREGOING, WE SEE NO SPECIAL PROBLEM IN ATTRACTING EITHER POTENTIAL AGENTS OR END-USERS TO CATALOG SHOW. HOWEVER, WE WILL AGAIN RAISE THE COROLLARY QUESTION OF WHETHER QUALIFIED YUGOSLAV END-USERS HAVE BEEN ENJOINED FROM MAKING DIRECT IMPORTS WHEN WE MAKE PROMOTIONAL CALL ON THE CROATIAN ECONOMIC CHAMBER.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ZAGREB00708
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750295-0541
From: ZAGREB
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750815/aaaaankc.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BELGRADE 4446
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUL 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: YUGOSLAV PRINTING INDUSTRY SOCIAL ACCORD AND PRINTING AND GRAPHIC ARTS CATALOG SHOW
TAGS: BEXP, YO
To: BELGRADE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006